

Applicant(s): Joseph A. Perault et al.
U.S.S.N.: 10/784,123

REMARKS

In response to the Office action mailed December 14, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. For the reasons set forth below, the application as presented is believed to be in allowable condition.

The specification is amended to include the serial numbers of the patent applications identified on page 1, lines 5-12 as required in the Office action. Reconsideration of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

Applicants acknowledge the allowance of claims 1-6 and 19. Applicants further acknowledge the allowable subject matter contained in claims 9-14, 17 and 18.

Claims 7, 8, 15 and 16 are rejected in the Office action as being anticipated by Bennett et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,036,787).

Claim 7 is directed to a stencil wiper apparatus for wiping a stencil of a stencil printer. The apparatus comprises a material supply assembly to deliver material across the stencil, and *means for evenly applying a fluid on the material* prior to the material being placed in a position proximate to the stencil.

The Examiner asserts that Bennett et al. teach a stencil wiper apparatus for wiping a stencil of a stencil printer, with the apparatus comprising a material supply assembly to deliver material across the stencil, and means for evenly applying a fluid on the material prior to the material being placed in a position proximate to the stencil.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertion. Bennett et al., in discussing prior stencil cleaners, disclose the concept of applying solvent to a cleaning sheet supplied on a roll by a solvent bar. Bennett et al. further disclose pumping the solvent into the solvent bar by a pump and spraying from the solvent bar through jets. This discussion of the overall state of the art prior to applicants' invention is also discussed by applicants in the application and shown in FIG. 4. Specifically, it is known to provide a solvent bar in the form of a hollow tube having a plurality of small openings formed therein along the length of the tube. Solvent under pressure is delivered to the central hollow region of the tube from a solvent source located at one end of the tube. Since the solvent is delivered to the tube at the end of the tube, maintaining consistent and even solvent pressure along the length of the tube is difficult. As a

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result, the web material (paper) proximate to the solvent source is overly wetted or soaked by the solvent, and the web material at the opposite end of the tube is insufficiently wetted.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, there is no showing, suggestion or disclosure in Bennett et al. of means for *evenly* applying the solvent on the material. In fact, Bennett et al. teach away from applicants' invention. The Examiner's attention is drawn to col. 4, lines 1-15 of Bennett et al., and especially lines 13-15, which read as follows: "[a] solvent bar 11 is disabled so that no solvent is applied to the sheet 1." Thus, Bennett et al.'s stencil cleaner does not even use solvent.

Accordingly, claim 7 is submitted as novel and patentable for the reasons set forth above.

Claim 8, which depends directly from claim 7, is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 7.

Independent claim 15 is directed to a method for wiping a stencil of a printing machine comprising: (a) delivering a roll of material having a width across the stencil; (b) *evenly applying fluid on the material across the width of the material*; and (c) placing the material in a position proximate to the stencil.

For the same reasons given for claim 7, claim 15 is submitted as novel and patentable over Bennett et al. since this reference fails to disclose, show or suggest the method step of *evenly* applying fluid on the material across the width of the material. Bennett et al.'s method suffers from the same disadvantages of prior wetting methods in that solvent is applied in greater quantities closer to the solvent source.

Claim 16, which depends from claim 15, is submitted as being novel and patentable over the references, including Bennett et al., for the same reasons given for claim 15.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, the application is believed to be in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the application, he is invited to contact the Applicants' Attorney at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



Keith F. Noe, Esq. (Reg. No. 34,686)
LOWRIE, LANDO & ANASTASI, LLP
Riverfront Office Park
One Main Street
Cambridge, MA 02142
Tel.: (617) 395-7039
Fax: (617) 395-7070
Attorney for Applicants

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